Real Women Have Curves Worksheet

1. Describe the *stasis* in the play: where, when, who, what, etc. in a paragraph.

This play is based in Los Angeles in a small sewing factory in September of 1987. There are 5 women: Ana, Carmen, Estela, Pancha, and Rosali. They work for Estela making garments for little wages, but have big aspirations.

2. What is the *intrusion*?

When Estela says that she doesn’t have her papers and money becomes an impending issue.

3. What is the *unique factor*?

The fact that Ana just graduated and Estela is struggling with the law at the same time her factory is struggling to stay open because of financial problems.

4. What is the *dramatic question* that should be answered by the end of the play?

Will Estela be deported? Will the shop stay open? Will they start up their own shop? Will Ana go to college?

5. Provide an illustration of the *two kinds of exposition* that the play has in it.

The exposition that is known to only one character is that Estela is not yet legal at the beginning.

The exposition that is known to all characters is the relationship and lives of each woman.

6. Identify the most *theatrical moment* in the play and of what importance it seems to be.

When the women take their clothes off to compare imperfections. It is a liberating moment for the characters and the audience. It explains the title of the play and the over all message it is trying to convey. The birthday party scene at the end as well.

7. List some of the *themes* of the play.

Feminism, body image, the power of education, pride of heritage, and success in America, coming of age.

8. What do the principal characters *want* and what are some *obstacles* that stand in the way of them getting what they want?

The women want men to notice them, but they are uncomfortable with their weight and they do not want to be sexualized.

Money: each one of them want to earn a living wage but Estela can not pay them because of the financial hardships she faces with the law suit.

Citizenship: this is only a problem for Estela now that the rest have their green cards, but Estela can’t become legal because of the law suit.

College: Ana wants to go to NYU, but she can’t do that until she receives her financial aid.

It is all of the characters against worldly things.

9. Describe some possible *images* in the play and how does the *title* help us understand the play.

The women themselves are the images that support the title. In the end, Estela opens a shop called Real Women Have Curves where she makes dresses for bigger women like her and her family.

10. Briefly define the *family relationships* that are examined in the play.

Family is every single one of the women in the play, not just the mother and the daughters. It is the safety that they feel with one another, and the way they can interact with one another. The conversations and the moments that they share all contribute to the meaning of family in the play.